Alberta Crop Report

Crop Conditions as of May 17, 2016

Unusually warm spring weather was interrupted by a brief frost which descended across most of the province, with the coldest temperatures occurring on May 13, 2016. Generally, the irrigated crops are looking good, dry land crops are in need of moisture and pasture and tame hay are under stress due to the dry conditions. Although warm weather contributed to seeding progress across the province, winds depleted surface soil moisture. About 75 per cent of crops across the province are seeded (See Table 1), compared to the 2011-2015 five-year average of 66 per cent at this time. Regionally, seeding progress (five-year average in brackets) was, for the Southern Region 87 (74) per cent, Central Region 78 (67) per cent, North East Region 63 (64) per cent, North West Region 66 (66) per cent and Peace Region 74 (51) per cent.

Last week showers in some areas maintained soil moisture, but conditions are generally dry. Provincially, surface soil moisture declined from last week and last year (See Table 2). Surface soil moisture is rated (five-year average in brackets) at 34 (seven) per cent poor, 36 (23) per cent fair, 29 (48) per cent good and one (22) per cent excellent.

Pasture and hay land are challenged with the lack of moisture. Provincially, pasture conditions are reported (five-year averages in brackets) as 38 (10) per cent poor, 34 (28) per cent fair, 26 (51) per cent good, and two (11) per cent excellent. Tame hay conditions are rated (five-year averages in brackets) as 34 (eight) per cent poor, 37 (28) per cent fair, 27 (52) per cent good and two (12) per cent excellent.

Table 1: Alberta Seeding Progress as of May 17, 2016

	% Seeded					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Average
Spr. Wheat	92.3%	83.1%	77.7%	89.9%	79.2%	84.2%
Dur. Wheat	94.5%	90.4%	-	-	-	93.9%
Barley	91.3%	67.0%	43.8%	49.6%	66.9%	68.0%
Oats	84.1%	47.3%	40.0%	52.5%	63.1%	51.8%
Canola	75.4%	79.9%	54.6%	55.0%	70.4%	66.5%
Dry Peas	98.0%	94.5%	98.8%	100.0%	85.5%	95.6%
Mustard	68.1%	71.3%	-	-	-	69.1%
Flax	65.0%	57.7%	25.0%	-	-	58.5%
Potatoes	89.2%	90.0%	75.0%	52.5%	-	86.1%
Dry Beans	13.0%	-	-	-	-	13.0%
Chickpeas	87.3%	96.5%	-	-	-	87.7%
Lentils	80.0%	93.8%	-	-	-	81.9%
Mixed Grain	60.0%	44.6%	1.7%	10.0%	-	35.2%
Average	**87.3%**	**78.1%**	**63.4%**	**66.2%**	**74.0%**	**75.2%**
Last Week	70.0%	51.0%	31.8%	26.0%	29.8%	44.8%
Last Year	92.8%	78.0%	72.5%	70.3%	54.6%	76.8%

Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

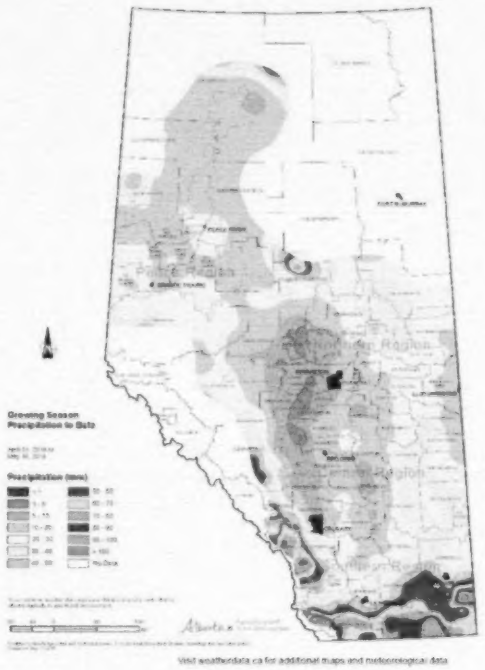
Growing Season Precipitation to Date
Precipitation (mm)
Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

Table 2: Surface Soil Moisture Ratings as of May 17, 2016

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive
South	13.4%	40.7%	45.5%	0.4%	-
Central	40.6%	35.9%	22.1%	1.1%	0.2%
N East	46.5%	26.9%	23.1%	3.5%	-
N West	68.2%	30.4%	1.4%	-	-
Peace	13.5%	48.8%	36.9%	0.8%	-
Average	33.6%	36.2%	28.8%	1.3%	-
Last Year	11.2%	34.0%	48.8%	5.8%	0.2%

Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen, staff of AFSC and the Alberta Ag-Info Centre for their partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program.

The precipitation map is compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Environmental Stewardship Branch, Technology and Innovation Section.

Growing Forward 2
A federal-provincial-territorial initiative

Alberta Government

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REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2016 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions.

Region One: Southern (Strathmore, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Foremost)

- Seeding is progressing rapidly with good germination. Overall, seeding is estimated at 87 per cent, up 17 per cent from a week ago, with 53 per cent of crops emerged.
- Due to showers and cooler weather this past week, surface soil moisture improved to 46 per cent being good to excellent from 34 per cent a week ago.
- Most parts of Southern Region have had several cold nights with a few below zero. Frost damage has reported for a few counties in the region.
- Pasture conditions are reported as 19 per cent poor, 50 per cent fair, 29 per cent good, and two per cent excellent, with similar ratings reported for tame hay.

Region Two: Central (Rimbey, Airdrie, Coronation, Oyen)

- Weather conditions over the last week were dry and cool, with a few nights of frost in most parts of the Central Region. There were reports of frost damage in nearly all areas of the region. While frost damage was reported in alfalfa, canola and legumes fields in some parts of the region, the severity of the frost is still unknown in some other areas.
- Seeding has progressed to 78 per cent complete, up 27 per cent from last week, with 21 per cent emerged.
- Surface moisture conditions are rated as 23 per cent good to excellent (42 per cent a week earlier).
- Pasture conditions are reported as 32 per cent poor, 37 per cent fair, 28 per cent good, and three per cent excellent, with similar ratings reported for tame hay.

Region Three: North East (Smoky Lake, Vermilion, Camrose, Provost)

- As of May 17, seeding stands at 63 per cent complete, compared to 32 per cent a week ago, with 22 per cent of crops emerged.
- Dry days combined with winds have depleted soil moisture. Overall, surface moisture conditions are rated as 27 per cent good to excellent, compared to 42 per cent a week ago. Warmer weather and more precipitation are needed to help with crop development.
- Forage crops are at a standstill due to dry conditions over the last few weeks. Pasture conditions are reported as 50 per cent poor, 18 per cent fair, 29 per cent good, and three per cent excellent, with similar ratings reported for tame hay.

Region Four: North West (Barrhead, Edmonton, Leduc, Drayton Valley, Athabasca)

- Seeding is progressing rapidly but germination appears to be slow due to dry conditions. Also, some already germinated fields are showing unevenness.
- Regionally, 66 per cent of the crop is now seeded, compared to 26 per cent a week ago, with 20 per cent of crops emerged. Some frost damage to alfalfa and seeded canola were reported.
- Surface soil moisture is rated as one per cent good to excellent, down from three per cent from a week ago.
- Pasture conditions are reported as 93 per cent poor, six per cent fair, and one per cent good, while tame hay growth reported as 79 per cent poor, 20 per cent fair and one per cent good.

Region Five: Peace River (Fairview, Falher, Grande Prairie, Valleyview)

- Warm and windy conditions over the past week advanced seeding operations, while diminished surface moisture. About 74 per cent of the region has now been seeded, compared to 30 per cent from a week ago, with 23 per cent of crops emerged.
- Surface soil moisture was 38 per cent good to excellent, compared to 50 per cent a week ago.
- Pasture conditions are at 20 per cent poor, 49 per cent fair, 30 per cent good, and one per cent excellent, with similar ratings reported for tame hay.

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